

EDINA PARK BOARD
8:00 P.M.
EDINA COMMUNITY ROOM
EDINA CITY HALL
SEPTEMBER 14, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Klus, Karla Sitek, Alice Hulbert, Jeff Johnson, Floyd Grabiell, Linda Presthus, Jeff Sorem, Andy Finsness, Mike Weiss

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Damman

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Susie Miller, John Valliere, Susan Weigle, Diana Hedges, Todd Anderson, Ann Kattreh, Tom Shirley

I. APPROVAL OF THE TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2004 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Mike Weiss MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 10, 2004 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Jeff Johnson SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. UPDATES

A. Tobacco-Free Regulation - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council passed a recommendation to make all parks tobacco-free including the golf courses and Centennial Lakes. Mr. Keprios explained that the City Council has directed the Park Director to draft the regulation under the authority granted by Code. He stated that not long ago he discussed the issue with his staff and how they were going to approach this to which a copy of his memo is in the Park Board packet. Mr. Keprios stated that the tobacco-free regulation would go into effect October 15th. He explained that they picked that date because it will give them enough time to order signs and put them in place.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he would like to give a big compliment to Ms. Miller because on the same day they held their staff meeting she generated a wonderful business size card for city employees to hand out to their customers. The card educates and informs people about the tobacco-free regulation. He pointed out that during the first year he is anticipating they are going to work hard on educating the public about the regulation. He explained that it's not a policy but rather a regulation that can be enforced if they so desire. However, for now they are going to approach this with an emphasis on education so that the public is aware that the parks are a special place and it's a regulation that we want people to abide by. It is not a voluntary compliance policy, it is a regulation. He commented that they would have all signage in place by October 15th when the regulation takes effect.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he was not at the City Council meeting, however, Mr. Grabiell, Mr. Damman and Dr. Hulbert were there. Mr. Klus asked Mr. Keprios to elaborate on the enforcement of this regulation, is it strictly going to be from park employees and if that doesn't work then enlist other city staff to help enforce it. Mr. Keprios replied that our primarily goal is to educate people to please not smoke and enforce it as necessary. If a staff member asked someone to put out their cigarette, etc. and that person became belligerent and out of control then yes staff could go as far as ejecting them from the park and/or call the police. It is their intent that park staff will be the ones enforcing this. Mr. Johnson indicated that he assumes this would include the arena and baseball fields at Braemar Park as well as the parking lot to which Mr. Keprios replied that is correct. Mr. Keprios stated that he had asked the question of whether people can smoke in their cars in the parking lots to which the answer is no.

Mr. Keprios expressed to the Park Board that he appreciates the time and energy that they have put into this. He noted that these are not easy issues and he appreciates the deliberation they gave it. He commented that he knows the City Council also appreciates the effort the Park Board put into this.

Mr. Grabiell commented that one of the things that happened at the City Council meeting was the Human Relations Commission wanted to change their name to the Civil Rights/Human Rights Commission or something to that affect. At that time, Mayor Maetzold made a point of commenting on the good work of the members of the Human Relations Commission and how much he appreciates all of their efforts, etc. Mr. Grabiell stated that in regards to the Park Board the point ought to be made that when a citizen body spends a lot of time on an issue it ought not be just ignored. He noted that it was pretty clear that the City Council had made up its mind. However, he felt that some of the City Council members changed their position during the meeting due to the crowd in the audience. Mr. Grabiell stated that he was the only person there that either spoke on behalf of the Park Board's resolution or against the expansion of the ordinance. He commented that he thought it was rather disheartening that when people on a public board like this spend a lot of time on an issue and then we are just blown off by the City Council. He suggested to Mr. Keprios that he might want to take this back to Mr. Hughes or someone. He added that he really feels this needed to be said. Mr. Klus commented that he doesn't disagree with Mr. Grabiell and indicated that he did call some of the City Council members about the Park Board's recommendation. He noted that it was clear to him in talking with them that their minds were made up before the City Council meeting and that they were not in favor of our motion at that time. Mr. Klus stated that he has been through this a couple of times with the Park Board where they worked very hard on an issue just to have the City Council reject it and go with their own thoughts. Mr. Klus commented that it does leave a bad taste because sometimes you don't want to work that hard because you feel the City Council has already made up their minds. However, we know that the spirit of the City Council is not to do that and we also know this is an election year and that may have had something to do with the decisions that were made. Mr. Klus noted that it is disappointing, however, and he thinks there are times and places for the Park Board to discuss these issues again the future. He stated that the Park Board

can do that but it cannot come from staff because staff has already been instructed on what they need to do.

III. 2005 FEES AND CHARGES

Mr. Klus explained that each year the Park Board is asked to look over the fees and charges for all of the enterprise facilities and then make a recommendation to the City Council for the fees and charges.

Mr. Keprios indicated that all changes in fees and charges from 2004 to 2005 are listed in bold print. Mr. Keprios started with the Park and Recreation fees and charges and indicated that quite a few of the fees have gone up very minimally. He pointed out that there is one significant change with the Fab 4 and 5 program in that it jumps from \$51.00 to \$66.00. He explained the reason for this is because they are adding an additional week to the program. Mr. Keprios stated that there are also some new programs being added and noted that he really has to applaud Ms. Miller and Ms. Tilsner for starting these new programs. He explained that these programs were created after the City Council had already passed the 2004 fees and charges and therefore didn't have the opportunity to vote on them.

Mr. MacHolda indicated that with the adult athletics everything has pretty much stayed the same with some slight increases in order to cover the referee/umpire increase.

Mr. MacHolda indicated that he is leaving the Aquatic Center season ticket the same rate as last year because he has raised the fee slightly over the past two years. He explained that so many of the season tickets are purchased before May 1st for the discounted price. However, because this past summer was so cool he thinks that in 2005 people may have a different mind-set and it may be more difficult to sell season tickets. He noted that he thinks people are going to wait as long as possible and determine which way their money is better spent. Mr. MacHolda stated that is the reason he would like to keep the season ticket rate the same slightly raise the daily admission fee. He pointed out that by raising the daily admission fee it might steer people towards a season ticket, which is like insurance in case there is bad weather during the summer season. In addition, he would like to deter some of the busloads of groups that come to the facility because he feels they kind of flush out the season ticket holder.

Mr. MacHolda informed the Park Board that last year the Park and Recreation Department discontinued teaching swimming lessons and partnered with the Foss Swim School. He explained that he rents the body of water, to which he charges a fairly competitive rate compared to some of his other venues, and it's not his place to tell them what those fees should be. Mr. MacHolda noted that they have a five-year contract with Foss Swim School to which they will be entering their third year.

Mr. Klus asked in terms of revenue were this year's season tickets the same as last year to which Mr. MacHolda replied that the dollar amount was just a little bit higher, however, the fees were higher so they probably sold a few less tickets. Mr. Klus asked what is the

percentage between season tickets and daily admissions to which Mr. MacHolda responded that the season ticket is the bulk of their revenue. However, during a good summer they can take in anywhere from \$150,000 to \$170,000 in daily admissions. Mr. Klus asked Mr. MacHolda if by raising the daily admission to \$9.00 does he think there will be less daily admissions. Mr. MacHolda replied that he doesn't think so but it is all weather generated.

Mr. Sorem asked what's the percent of residents to non-resident who purchase season tickets to which Mr. MacHolda replied that approximately 40% of the season ticket holders are non-residents. He noted that many of those people who are non-residents grew up in Edina.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that Mr. Thayer could not be here tonight because of a previous commitment. Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. Thayer annually increases the hourly ice fee \$5.00, which he is doing that again this year. He noted that essentially it would take over the first week in September of 2005 where the fee will then become \$155.00 an hour. He stated that everything else is staying the same because he doesn't see a need for any increases. Mr. Johnson asked when the bond would be done to which Mr. Keprios replied in 2009 and at that time they will be able to turn a profit. Mr. Sorem asked how does Braemar's hourly rate compare to other rinks to which Mr. Keprios replied they are right there with everyone else.

Ms. Hedges indicated that the Art Center is going to make a fairly aggressive raise this year. They would like to raise their classes by 10%. She noted they have also made a few raises of 2% and 3%, which still keeps them on the high side of the range compared to other art centers. Ms. Hedges indicated that the Bloomington Art Center so far has lost 200 students this year. She stated that Edina's Art Center has either held steady or gone up. She indicated that they are still keeping the 5% discount to members who are residents and added that not a lot of people take advantage of it. Ms. Hedges pointed out that they would still like to keep the family classes at a lower rate because a lot of families are struggling and more people are able to be involved at the lower rate.

Ms. Hedges pointed out that they have consolidated the Media Arts Studio Equipment to allow more space for the "School of Realism," which is a four-year program and is a very serious affiliated type of training center. She noted that their computer system has been moved to the Senior Center where they are offering classes. Ms. Hedges indicated that Phil Johnson, Art Center Media Manager, is now working part-time which will help cut their expenses. Ms. Hedges stated that their donations are up as well as the sales in their gallery.

Mr. Klus asked if there are still capital things going on at the Art Center that they will be looking at to which Mr. Keprios replied they just awarded a bid for the roofing project for approximately \$26,000. In addition, they are going to expand the parking lot, which he will discuss at next month's Park Board meeting.

Dr. Hulbert indicated that she understands that the Art Center is renting space at the Senior Center and asked if it's something that will likely expand. Ms. Hedges replied that they have six studio session artists at the Senior Center who rent the space for \$120.00 a month from 8:00 to 4:30 each day. She noted that it's been wonderful for both the Senior Center and Art Center because they each receive revenue from it. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he did not intend for that fee to be put on the fees and charges schedule. He explained that it's really his duty to determine how much one facility should charge another within the Park Department. He apologized to the Park Board and noted that it will be taken off of the schedule.

Mr. Valliere pointed out that with the number of golf courses that are out there it's a very tough market. He noted that he anguished a lot about raising any of the fees, however, on the expense side they need to do something to offset it. He explained that a lot of the charges are incidental and do not derive a lot of revenue. Mr. Valliere stated that the key items of the golf course are the greens fees and noted that they are looking at a \$1.00 increase for 2005, which is basically a 3% increase. He indicated that he thinks their golfers can live with that. Mr. Valliere commented that approximately every five years they try to increase the patron card to which the last increase was in 1999, however, in 2004 it wasn't appropriate so for 2005 there is a \$5.00 increase to which he doesn't think it will impact too many people. Mr. Valliere indicated this year he is asking for a junior rate because he feels that the cost of golf has climbed to such an extent that the juniors aren't able to play a lot. He noted that a lot of them are beyond playing at the executive course. Therefore, he would like to give them a break because a lot of these kids are paying for it themselves and to pay \$33.00 for them is a bit much. He added that it used to be that the course didn't have a lot of open times but now there are some open times and he would really like to capture these juniors as future golfers. Therefore, he is advocating an \$18.00, 18 hole rate and a \$9.00, 9-hole rate. Mr. Valliere indicated that it's been three years since they've made any increases at the executive course and noted that they are moving from \$11.00 to \$12.00. He noted that of all the 48 executive courses in the area they are a little bit low, so he doesn't see a problem with the \$1.00 increase.

Mr. Grabiell asked Mr. Valliere if he put his fees together before or after the tobacco-free action was taken to which he replied he put them together before. Mr. Grabiell asked Mr. Valliere if he thinks that made a difference to which he replied he thinks it could affect them. Mr. Valliere noted that a couple of leagues have informed him that they are not going to play at Braemar if the smoking ban stays on to which one of them pre-paid for the year to the tune of approximately \$8,000.00. He commented that there are a few other things the tobacco-free ban may affect such as the food/beverage situation and what he is most fearful of is the loss of wedding receptions.

Dr. Hulbert asked Mr. Valliere if they have ever looked at having a season pass for a bucket of balls to which he replied they have, however, it was their decision that they would massively come out on the short end. He explained that what they used to do, and they may do it again at some point, is sell a pass where you could get 12 buckets of balls for the cost of 10. In doing it that way they can control it as well as reward their loyal customers.

Mr. Keprios expressed that he really appreciates and supports what Mr. Valliere is proposing. Mr. Johnson asked at what age is someone no longer a junior to which Mr. Valliere replied you are no longer a junior at 18 years of age. Mr. Weiss asked if there is a junior patron card to which Mr. Valliere replied there is not although some juniors do buy it for the convenience of making a tee time. He noted that maybe that is something that they can look into.

Mr. Grabiell asked Mr. Valliere if Braemar has implemented the wine and strong beer to which he replied that it reached his desk yesterday. Mr. Keprios explained that it got a little complex because of the State and we needed to jump through another legal loop that required Braemar to attain a dispensary license. Therefore, the City Council still has dictated that we will still only sell 3.2 beer as opposed to strong beer but we will have the ability to sell wine.

Dr. Hulbert noted that she thinks the idea of getting a punch card for the driving range would probably be really helpful for the juniors because she is always dropping her kids off at the golf course.

Mr. Shirley indicated that at Edinborough Park they have kept every fee the same for 2005. He pointed out that last year they visited their fees late in the year with the addition of the play park as well as they raised the daily admissions to the pool and track. Mr. Shirley stated that over the year their gross revenues were in excess \$400,000, so it has worked very well.

Mr. Shirley stated that at Centennial Lakes they made a couple of small increases with the Friday and Saturday night wedding rentals. He commented that like Mr. Valliere they are also a little leery of raising that too much. He noted that they are basically booked solid, however, it will be interesting to see how they are affected by the tobacco-free regulation. Mr. Shirley commented that the only other increase they've made is they raised the winter sled rental up \$1.00 because they can barely keep the sleds in stock. He indicated that everything else is staying the same.

Mr. Keprios indicated that again he really has to commend Mr. Shirley and Ms. Kattreh because they have absolutely hit a home run with the play park. He noted that in the beginning they said they would be very pleased if they hit \$100,000 mark and as of right now it's over \$400,000.

Mr. Klus asked Ms. Kattreh how the playground equipment is holding up to which she replied it is holding up incredibly well, much better than they had anticipated. She noted that the company has been very good at coming in and fixing anything that needs to be done because the warranty period is almost over with. Ms. Kattreh pointed out that even the manufacturers are a little surprised because this is one of the heaviest used structures they've ever installed. It's been a good test of the quality of their product.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the park rentals went up \$2.00 an hour. He noted that the athletic fields went up \$5.00 an hour and can only be rented by residents of Edina. He stated that they did not raise the per participant fee for the athletic associations, which includes the Edina Hockey Association's use of the outdoor rinks as well, because they were just raised a year ago. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he is proposing a \$5.00 increase for a half-day use of the four premiere shelter buildings. He commented that he is very pleased that they are getting such a tremendous amount of use. He added that he doesn't think \$5.00 is going to make a big difference and added that the city is spending a lot more to maintain them. Mr. Keprios stated that he thinks the premiere shelter buildings will make a good argument for replacing the older shelter buildings, which have limited use beyond the skating season. Mr. Sorem asked how does it work when someone wants to rent one on a Saturday night during the winter months. Mr. Keprios responded that they wouldn't allow it to be rented because when it's open to the public for ice-skating, it's not available for rent.

Ms. Weigle stated that they are not raising their yearly dues this year and noted that they are probably one of the only senior centers that even ask for a yearly due. She noted that what they are now doing is adding a spot to put in a donation when they send in their membership fee. She commented that the fee is \$16.00 and a lot of people are sending in \$20.00 and \$25.00. Ms. Weigle informed the Park Board that she thinks they have done very well and their membership is approximately 1,700.

Ms. Weigle indicated that they are currently in the process of working on the kitchen so that they will have more flexibility. She noted that they are taking out all of the cupboards and redistributing them in other rooms as well as they will be putting in a three basin sink, a hand-washing sink, a proper refrigerator and freezer. She stated that thanks to both Rotary groups they are able to have this. Mr. Klus asked Ms. Weigle shouldn't there be a rental fee for this area for the future to which she replied they are not ready yet but it will happen down the road. She noted that she hopes the kitchen will be done before October 19th.

Mr. Grabiell asked what does the Senior Center consider a senior to which Ms. Weigle replied 55 and older.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that one thing that's new this year is there's a Community Education fee. He noted that Edina Community Education will be paying a minimal fee to have their classes at the Senior Center and they don't seem to have an issue with it. Ms. Weigle noted that the seniors love going to the senior center for classes so they decided they needed to make some money from that too.

Mr. Anderson indicated that at the golf dome they are proposing minimal increases to which they are still in the ballpark as their competitors.

Mr. Klus asked Mr. Keprios if he sees any of the proposed fees as being controversial with the City Council to which he replied he doesn't think so.

Floyd Grabiell MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2005 FEES AND CHARGES AS STATED FOR THE PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT. Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Grabiell indicated that he was at the Art Show at Centennial Lakes on Saturday and noted that he would like to compliment Mr. Shirley and all of the staff at Centennial Lakes for the wonderful job they did. Mr. Klus noted that as a Park Board he would like to compliment all of the staff who run the enterprise facilities.

IV. UPDATES

A. Off-Leash Dog Park – Mr. Keprios explained to the Park Board that in the past they tried to get an off-leash dog park in Edina and therefore hired a consultant to do a study. He noted that the Park Board went through the recommendation process and the City Council agreed that the best spot for an off-leash dog park would be to have some type of arrangement with the Minneapolis Park Board to use the Minneapolis Water Works site on France Avenue. Mr. Keprios explained that the City of Minneapolis owns this four plus acres of property and noted that the City of Minneapolis recently contacted him and said they have an interest for us to use this as a dog park. Mr. Keprios pointed out that before it was the Minneapolis Park Board that wanted to do this. The Minneapolis Park Board is a completely different entity. He noted that it didn't fly the last time because the City of Minneapolis wouldn't allow us access. In addition, Edina already has a joint powers agreement with the City of St. Louis Park and it fell apart because the City of Minneapolis wouldn't allow them access. He noted that the City of Minneapolis informed him that they would be willing to lease Edina the property for \$6,000/year with the condition that they would have to include the Minneapolis Park Board. Mr. Keprios indicated that they already have an arrangement with the Minneapolis Park Board if they live up to their part. He stated that he called the Minneapolis Park Board and they said they would love to be a part of it but they have budget issues right now and the only thing they would be able to do is give a few dollars for fencing but that they would not be able to operate it. Mr. Keprios pointed out that is completely different from what the joint powers agreement states. He indicated that he has asked the Assistant Superintendent of Minneapolis to send him a letter to see what level of commitment they are willing to come up with. He noted that once he receives that he would bring it to the Edina Park Board. He indicated that he wanted to give the Park Board a heads up on this issue.

B. Indoor Athletic Field Facility - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City agreed 100% with the Park Board's recommendation and that the next step is to hire a consultant to study it. We need to know how much it's going to cost to put up the facility, how much it's going to cost to operate it as well as is it a feasible site. He noted that another point that the City Council brought up is they should not be too short sided if they ever decide to put in additional hockey rinks. They don't want to block themselves from that possibility. Mr. Keprios explained that he has sent a request for a proposal to a firm that's very familiar with the site who did a study on putting up a bubble some time ago. He noted that hopefully by Thursday he would have an answer as to what it is going to cost to do this.

Mr. Klus noted that the Park Board would need to decide, with recommendations from the staff, what is feasible for the city to put forth as well as how much does the community need to raise. Mr. Keprios commented that he was pleased that the City Council made the comment for now let's not worry about the funding but rather is this feasible, is this the right location and is this the right type of facility. Does this make sense now as well as ten years from now?

Mr. Klus indicated that he feels the Park Board needs to continue to push forward until they get to a point where they know the City Council will approve a site. In addition, they need to look at the money issue and see if the community is ready to act on it. Mr. Klus stated that he's real hopeful that they can push it that far and if the community decides they don't want to support the issue then at least they've done their job as Park Board and can put it to bed. However, he thinks they need to push it that far and is hoping that the one large contributor from the Lacrosse area will still have the money and still want to make a large contribution towards this.

C. Gymnasiums – Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that the City does have a letter from School Board stating that they are in favor of trying to work out some kind of an agreement with the City to build two gyms on the south end of the Community Center. Mr. Johnson explained that recently the School Board had a workshop on this and there are still two or three board members who are against building anything new. However, the majority of the board is in favor of looking at this especially since they are now going through the construction phase. He explained that there are a couple of different ideas being thrown around, one of which is putting something by the tennis courts and the other would be to add on to where the hut is right now. Mr. Johnson noted that would be a total of six useable gymnasiums in one area, which will be good for tournament purposes. He indicated that the initial proposal is the school will provide the site and city will pay for the capital and operating expenses. He noted that if the Surge program, Kids Club or another school program needs to use the facility during the day then they could work out some kind of a fee. Mr. Johnson stressed that he can't see this not working and he would be very disappointed if it doesn't work out. He stated that this problem is not going to go away because it's only going to get worse and worse. He commented that now is the time to do it when they have the architects and the builders otherwise it's going to be twice as expensive to do it in the future. Mr. Johnson pointed out that the biggest worry for some of the School Board members is they don't want to do anything more than what they've asked for in the 85 million dollar referendum. He noted that he thinks if it's communicated to the public that the city is paying for both the capital and operating expenses that most people will be okay with it. Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that at the City Council meeting it was decided that Scot Housh and Jim Hovland would work with a committee from the School Board and a representative from Basketball Association. Mr. Klus noted that Mr. Keprios and he would like to see someone from the Park Board also be a part of this. He commented that he would really like to try and get this done because it is a very important issue and the best place for it is at the schools or Community Center.

Ms. Presthus comment that she would again like to commend Mr. Johnson, who's been very proactive with this on behalf of the Park Board as well as Linda Masica who has also worked very constantly towards it. Mr. Johnson pointed out that he doesn't want anyone to rule out Kuhlman being domed, he's still fighting for that. He noted that there are six houses as far as he could tell that would be affected by it and there may be a few people complaining but he thinks it would be for the good of the community. Kuhlman is definitely the obvious place to put it.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that one of the real issues with placing an indoor athletic field facility at Braemar is that it's going to sit empty during the day, which is such a shame. He noted that the whole concept of putting something, even a bubble, at Braemar makes him ill because it's the wrong place for it. Mr. Weiss stated that he thinks there are going to be other issues with putting something at the Community Center because a lot more traffic will be brought in. That quiet neighborhood all of a sudden isn't so quiet.

V. OTHER

A. Park Presentations - Mr. Keprios indicated that, if they want, Ms. Sitek and Ms. Presthus could both give their park presentations at the October Park Board meeting.

B. Grandview Square Park – Mr. Keprios indicated that he has hired an architect to design a plan for Grandview Square Park. Opus and Ron Clark Construction are each putting \$14,500 to develop the small park. He noted that the plan is to develop it into something more attractive than just grass; possibly some sculptures and unique landscaping. He stated that they are also going to promote a fundraising effort like they did at Fox Meadow Park.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Karla Sitek MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:25 PM. Floyd Grabiell SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.